

## **Eligibility Guidelines for Child Care Assistance (CCA)**

Child Care Assistance (CCA) is a program that can help income eligible families with the cost of child care. Families may apply for CCA by submitting a Child Care Assistance Application or a Health and Financial Support Application to their local county DHS office.

### **Age Requirements**

- Children must be under age 13, or
- Age 13 up to age 19, if the child has special needs (documentation of the special need must be provided), or
- Age 13 up to age 16 if there are special family circumstances that put the safety and well being of the child at risk if left home alone (the parent or guardian must apply for an exception to policy).

### **Citizenship/Alien Status**

Children must be United States citizens or have a qualifying alien status to be eligible for CCA.

### **Need for Service**

The family must have a need for service to be eligible for CCA. All parents in the household must meet at least one of the need requirements. Need for child care service includes:

- Full time, as defined by the school, academic or vocational training (limited to 24 fiscal months)
- Employed 28 or more hours per week
- Protective child care, when the child has a case plan that identifies protective child care as a required service
- Medical absence or incapacity (temporary)
- Seeking employment (limited to one 30-consecutive-day period in any 12-month period)
- FIP recipient participating in PROMISE JOBS activities

## Income Guidelines

Both earned and unearned income is used to determine eligibility. Families applying for child care who are on FIP or because of a protective need do not have to meet the income guidelines, but must have a need for service.

### Gross (before taxes) monthly income limits

Family Size	Basic Care	Special Needs
1 member	\$1,257	\$1,734
2 members	\$1,692	\$2,334
3 members	\$2,127	\$2,934
4 members	\$2,562	\$3,534
5 members	\$2,997	\$4,134
6 members	\$3,432	\$4,734
7 members	\$3,867	\$5,334

## Information Needed to Process Your Application

**You must provide the Department with information to determine if you are eligible for CCA. If possible, supply this information with your application.**

- If you are working, you must provide proof of your income from the past 30 days, such as pay stubs, a statement from your employer listing your gross wages and the hours you work or your employer completing a DHS form called the Employer's Statement of Earnings. If you are self-employed, you must provide your tax return or self-employment records including income and expenses.
- If you are attending academic or vocational training on a full time basis, you must provide your class schedule.
- If your household receives any other money, you must provide proof of the amount. Other money includes unemployment benefits, SSI, Social Security, child s Support, Veterans Benefits or any other money you receive from a source outside of a job.

## Co-Pay

A family may be responsible for paying for part of their child care costs. This is called a co-pay. The family's co-pay is based on family size, gross income, and the number of children in care. The family is responsible to pay the co-pay directly to the provider. Families receiving child care because they are FIP recipients or because of protective needs do not have a co-pay.

## Eligibility Determinations

The Department will process your application as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days from the date you apply for child care. We will notify you regarding your eligibility in writing with a Notice of Decision (NOD). This will tell you what children are approved for CCA, the start date and end date of assistance, the number of units approved, and your family's co-pay amount.

The Department must review every family's eligibility for CCA at least every six months. We will send you a review form with a due date on it. You must complete the review process for us to determine if you are eligible to keep getting CCA. If you do not return the review form by the due date your CCA will end on the date given on your original NOD. If you return the review form along with all needed information, you will receive a new NOD regarding your eligibility.

## **Changes**

You must tell your worker about the following changes within 10 days of the change:

- Work hours
- Class schedule
- Income
- Address change
- A change in who lives in your home
- Change in child care provider

## **Provider Requirements**

You may choose any type of child care provider you wish. However, the provider you choose must be approved by DHS before payments can be made. To be "approved" the provider must be:

- A licensed center, or
- A registered child development home, or
- A nonregistered child care home who has certified that they meet minimum health and safety requirements and has passed the required criminal background and abuse checks.

You must have at least three children eligible for CCA to have a provider care for your children in your home.

All providers must sign a CCA Provider Agreement before payment can be made to them on behalf of eligible children. This agreement outlines the terms and conditions for the CCA program and certifies the reimbursement rates DHS will pay.

If you use a child care provider before they have been determined to be an eligible provider and they do not get approved as a provider, you will have to pay the provider yourself.

## **Provider Notification**

If your family is eligible for CCA, your provider will receive a copy of your NOD. This will tell the provider what children are approved for CCA, the start date and end date of assistance, the number of units approved, and your family's co-pay amount. If you use a child care provider before you are eligible for CCA, you will have to pay the provider yourself.

The provider will not get any additional notification that your eligibility period is ending when it is time for your review. If you return the review form along with all needed information, your provider will receive a new NOD regarding your eligibility.